



Call To Action to Implement *Child Labour Free Zones* (CLFZs) in Pathfinder Countries to Eliminate Child Labour

Africa Regional Symposium for World Day
Against Child Labour

13th June 2023, Kampala Uganda



We

the African local, regional and international civil society organisations and teachers' unions, from Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo, present at the *Africa Regional Symposium* on promoting **Area Based Approach**¹ in Pathfinder Countries to Eliminate Child Labour, stand together in our commitment to take collective action to protect the rights of the children engaged in child labour and work together to establish and advocate for sustainable **child labour free zones** for the elimination of child labour.

We recall Target 8.7, the international ILO conventions and ratification, and the previous international agreements from the governments of Pathfinder countries which aim to eradicate child labour worldwide. Noteworthy are the commitments at the recent *5th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour (Durban, 2022)*; *2021 International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour*; the *Oslo International Conference on Child Labour, 1997*, the *Hague Global Child Labour Conference, 2010* which gave rise to the pragmatic *Roadmap for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour*; the *III Global Conference on Child Labour, Brasilia, 2013* and the *IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour, Buenos Aires, 2017*, where hundreds of pledges were made for the elimination of child labour and forced labour.

The world has united through these milestones, making resolute pledges to eliminate child labour and these endeavors reinforce our shared commitment to ensure a world free from child labour. Acknowledging the importance of fulfilling these commitments, now more important than ever, as committed pathfinder countries and their respective stakeholders, together, we urge the members of the Alliance 8.7 and Pathfinder Country governments in Africa to commit towards: "*Prioritising Area Based Approach in Planning, Policies and Action to Eliminate Child Labour.*" With the increasing number of African countries becoming PFCs² it is crucial to show progress and evidence on implementing effective solutions to address child labour. **CLFZ (Child Labour Free Zones)** is one such solution and must be collectively adopted and promoted to address child labour in Africa.

[1] The area-based approach (ABA), also known as Integrated Area Based Approach (IABA) introduced by the International Labour Organisation, (ILO), aims to eliminate child labour, targeting specific geographic locations or communities where child labour is prevalent and implementing community-centric sustainable solutions. It recognizes that child labour is often deeply rooted in the social and economic context of communities, and that effective solutions require a context-specific approach addressing concerns to eliminate it. The ABA prioritises creating good-practice models that lay the groundwork for the establishment of models such as child- labour free zones (CLFZs) or child friendly villages (CFVs) and similar structures that would be scaled-up in the future. For any model to ABA qualified, it is also crucial to include a Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS). Often, the terms ABA, CLFZs, CFVs and CLMS are used interchangeably. However, it is crucial to understand, that the ABA is a lens used to set up or guide the development of models such as CLFZ, CFVs and CLMS

[2] <https://www.alliance87.org/pathfinders>

As Pathfinder Countries, our mandate is to “**go further and faster to achieve Target 8.7[2]** by accelerating efforts, trying new approaches, and collaborating with others to commit to develop, adopt and put into practice improved legislation, national action plans, or policies on child labour, forced labour, modern slavery and/or human trafficking; translate public commitments into concrete actions – especially relevant in this regard are the key steps identified in the **Durban Call to Action** and Ratify, or actively work towards the ratification or implementation of, applicable international human rights standards, including international labour standards.”

CALL TO ACTION

On the **13th of June 2023, in Kampala, Uganda**, we adopt the call to action to scale up action to :

1

Promote Knowledge Sharing

Promote inter-pathfinder country learning and knowledge exchange with CSOs (Civil Society Organizations) and Unions to enhance our capacity on implementing the child labour free zones

2

Boost Community Livelihood

Accelerate multi-stakeholder efforts with a focus on child labour in agriculture and worst forms of child labour such as in Artisanal Small Scale Mining (ASM) by integrating innovative solutions in CLFZs for boosting income of communities

3

Access Quality Education & Social Protection

Advocate for children’s right to education, universal access to free, compulsory, quality, equitable and inclusive education, social protection and food security

4

Strive for stakeholder collaboration

Enhance our collective efforts as CSOs to bridge the gap between local and global advocacy and represent a collective and unified strong message towards international stakeholders for collaboration

[2] <https://www.alliance87.org/pathfinders>

WE CALL ON THE GOVERNMENTS OF PATHFINDER COUNTRIES TO :

- **Translate** their pledges and commitments into action by integrating the implementation of CLFZs in the respective pathfinder roadmap priorities and financially supporting the creation of CLFZs to prevent and eliminate child labour, with priority given to the agriculture sector and the worst forms of child labour while paying attention to other emerging needs that push children to work.
- **Facilitate** regular meetings sharing experiences between PFCs on the ABA to make it the core of child labour interventions.
- **Revise** their pathfinder roadmap priorities by reevaluating the priorities and actions and align responsibilities, timelines, and budgets to fulfil the same to meet target 8.7. This could include but should not be limited to strengthening adherence to international child rights and labour standards, regional action plans such as African Union Ten-Year Action Plan on Child Labour, act on gaps in legislative action and policies, initiate and sustain new partnerships, social dialogue and generate relevant data and indicators to measure progress. Most importantly, be consistent and collaborative in communicating its Pathfinder roadmap progress and challenges in the reports.
- **Invest, Integrate and Mobilise** pre-existing socio-economic structures and resources to promote decent work and access to finance for adults and youth above the minimum age for work for a stronger and long-lasting CLFZ, especially in agriculture to reduce the functional dependence of children in small family farms that accounts for most of the child labour in Sub-Saharan Agriculture.
- **Improve social protection measures** for better access to health, education, food security to ensure poverty is addressed and to ensure realisation of children's right to education and ensure universal access to free, compulsory, quality, equitable and inclusive education, and training. Additionally, as recommended by the Durban call to action, “grant necessary funding of compulsory education so that all governments seek to commit at least four to six per cent of GDP and/or at least 15 to 20 percent of public expenditure to education, as recommended by the UNESCO Education”
- **Collaborate with and support** farmer (employer) organisations to organise farmers (membership) to towards cleaning their supply chains for a zero child labour tolerance policy, support formalisation of the informal companies and increase opportunities for financial access as well as engage with and support representative organizations of small producers; reassessing piece-rate wage systems in agriculture and recognizing the need to guarantee adequate minimum wages for agricultural workers, sufficient to meet their families' needs^[3]

[3] Durban call to action 2022

WE CALL ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO :

- ▶ Display a due diligence process to identify child labour risks and vulnerabilities.
- ▶ Strengthen their CSR policies to reinvigorate ethical, responsible business practices.
- ▶ Regulate suppliers in the informal sector working together with CSOs and governments.
- ▶ Building collaborative capacities on *area-based approach* as a good practice.

WE CALL ON THE ALLIANCE 8.7 MEMBERS TO :

- ▶ Promote the ABA within the child labour platform and develop pilots with the members of this platform.
- ▶ Provide a learning and sharing space to strengthen and promote child labour free zones in the pathfinder countries.
- ▶ Provide support to mobilise resources and funds to implement the CLFZs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We offer our heartfelt gratitude to all the panelists and participants who made this engagement a success, leading to a concrete Call To Action. We would like to thank the panelists from Pathfinder countries - Malawi, DRC, Ethiopia, and Uganda who made the time and effort to share their experiences and challenges of implementing the area-based approach in their countries.

We would also like to thank the technical staff of the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development, Uganda for their participation, endorsement, and consistent support in advocating for the promotion of ABA to accelerate progress toward the elimination of child labour. Most importantly this event would have been impossible without the time and cooperation of the participants from key CSOs of Uganda, employers organizations, ILO, UN agencies and Academia.

LIST OF ORGANISATIONS

This call to action has been endorsed by the representatives of the organisations below during the **Africa Regional Symposium for World Day Against Child Labour**, 13th June 2023 in Kampala, Uganda.

PACT (Partners for community transformation) Uganda, FUE (Federation of Uganda Employers) Children of Uganda, Uganda National Teachers' Union (UNATU), PACT DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo) Teachers' Union Malawi, WCAT (Wabe Children's Aid and Training) Ethiopia, CIPA (Community initiative for prosperity and advancement) Uganda, HiVOS Uganda, RACA (Rakai Counselor's Association) Uganda SOMERO Uganda, ECLA (Elimination of Child Labour in Agriculture) Uganda, The AfriChild Center Makerere UPB Uganda, RUDMEC (Rural Development Media Communications) Uganda, Nascent Research and Development Organization Uganda, UCRNN (Uganda child rights NGO network), Health Child Uganda, Child Aid Uganda, Hope for Justice Uganda, Child Rights Support Initiative Uganda, African Agency for Integrated Development Uganda, Dwelling Places Uganda, Abaana Ministries Uganda, Every Child Matters, Uganda Platform for Labour Action Uganda, New Vision Uganda, NBS Television Uganda, Daily Monitor Uganda